

2018



VIRGINIA
MAIN
Street
VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT
OF HOUSING AND
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

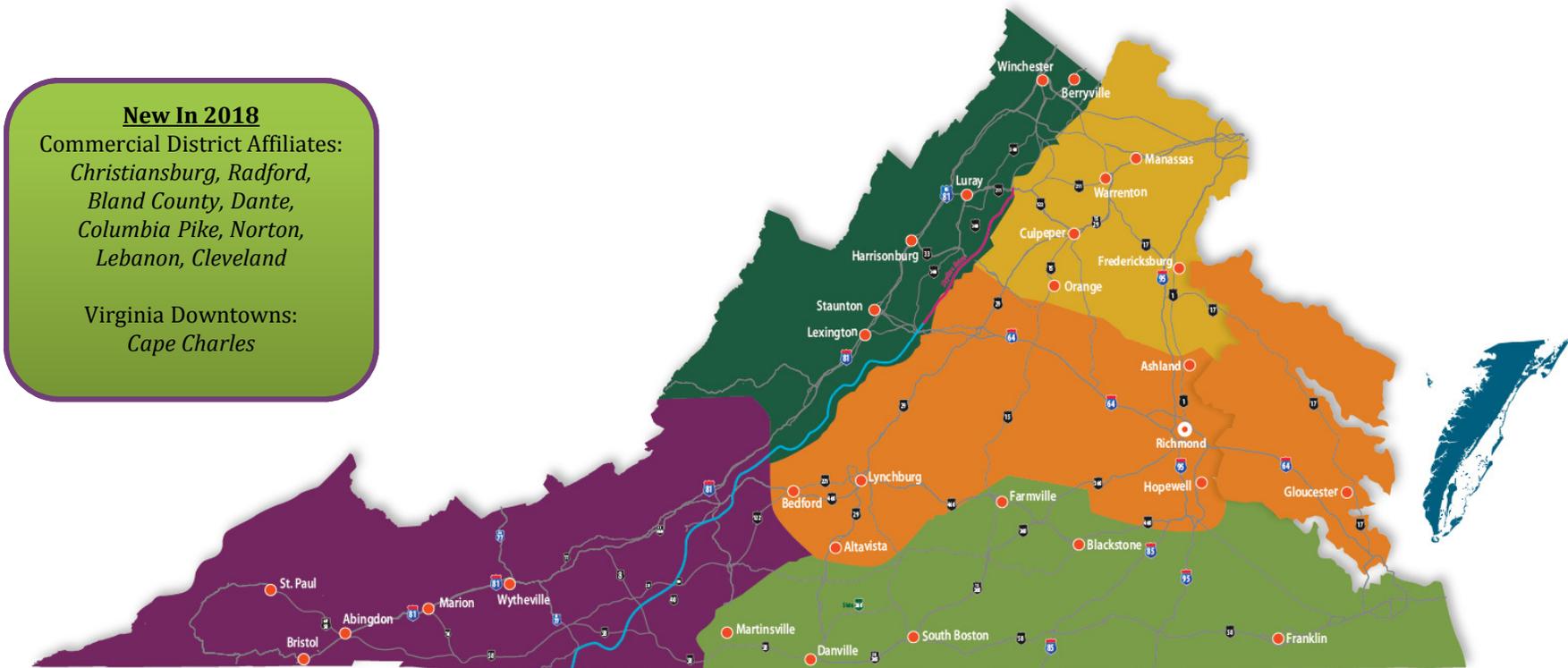
Virginia Main Street Annual Report

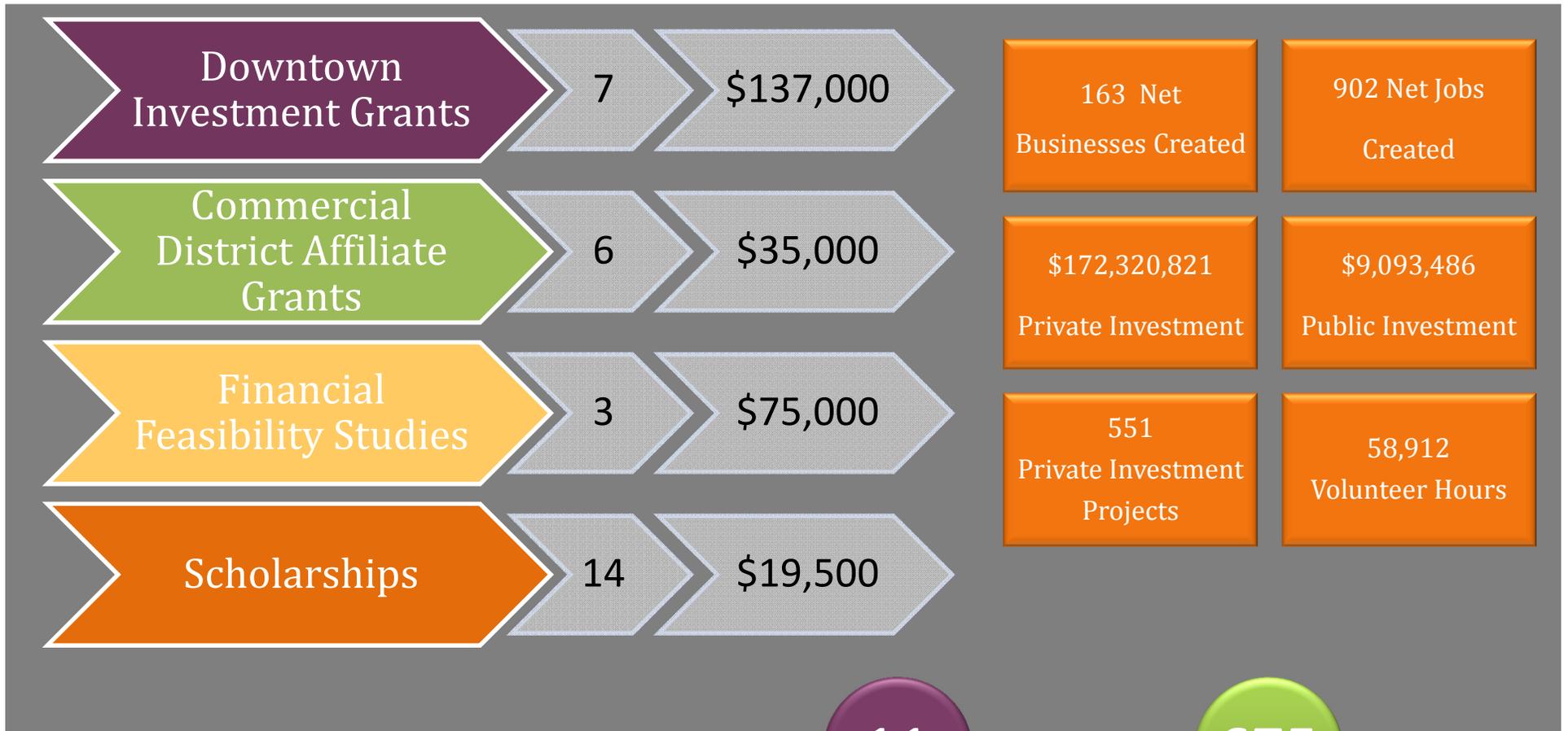


Virginia’s historic commercial districts, commonly known as “downtowns,” have served as the social, commercial and cultural centers of our communities for over 400 years. Our downtowns still provide the center around which most of Virginia’s communities revolve. The Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development’s (DHCD) Virginia Main Street program constantly refines its services to provide contemporary assistance in making our historic downtowns vital and providing opportunity for growth throughout Virginia.

As Virginia Main Street entered its third decade of service to communities of the commonwealth, staff worked to increase impacts by expanding the affiliate tier to include DHCD Commercial District Affiliates and Virginia Downtowns – bringing technical services, training and grant opportunities to more communities. Staff worked with both designated and affiliate communities to employ the Main Street Approach™ of utilizing community vision and market understanding to create outcomes through targeted design, economic, organization and promotional strategies and activities. Through grant opportunities and technical assistance on the latest in economic development, entrepreneurship, placemaking and fundraising DHCD endeavored to provide each community individualized support and services.

The Virginia Main Street program recognizes 28 communities as designated, one Virginia Downtown and over 80 Commercial District Affiliates.





“Vibrant downtown neighborhoods are important to help our cities and towns attract new businesses, invite tourism and grow the Virginia economy.” – Gov. Ralph Northam

11

Training Events Held

675

Number of attendees

Abingdon: Awarded a Virginia Commission of the Arts grant to expand their Busker Fest street festival.

Altavista: Created a new “How to Start Your Business” guide.

Ashland: Hired a new executive director, realigned events to be impactful and implemented a transformation strategy.

Bedford: Completed the School-to-School Area Study focused on Bridge Street.

Berryville: Hired a new executive director and focused on attracting new businesses

Blackstone: Won \$5,000 from the VMS Pitch Contest and completed the Town Square Project.

Bristol: Worked with both cities to remove and replace 55 trees downtown.

Culpeper: Awarded a \$75,000 grant from USDA to assist small or emerging businesses in the downtown historic district.

Danville: Won \$150,000 Partners in Preservation grant for North Union Street

Farmville: Held another successful SOUP event for the third year.

Franklin: Held second round of Start-Up Franklin business plan competition.

Fredericksburg: Held its first annual *Downtown Affair* farm-to-table dinner, which raised new funds.

Gloucester: Created a new “Downtown Fit” program, a free outdoor fitness-based program.

Harrisonburg: Launched the *Bricks & Clicks* program to help businesses strengthen their bricks-and-mortar destinations.

Hopewell: Added two new coffee shops, three restaurants and meadery in downtown.

Lexington: Held Launch Lex business plan competition creating seven new businesses, filling five vacant downtown storefronts.

Luray: Had a record number of visitors to downtown through strategic marketing and events.

Lynchburg: Created the Adopt-a-Block program to create a welcoming environment and assisted with signage at 17 parking decks.

Manassas: Partnered to host the inaugural *One Love Manassas* three-day multimedia art event that celebrated the artistic community.

Marion: Saw a substantial increase in building rehabs with additional housing for college students.

Martinsville: Held a successful Startup Martinsville Henry-County business plan competition resulting in three new businesses.

Orange: Hired a new executive director and worked to attract new board members and volunteers.

South Boston: Created the *South Boston Keep Entrepreneurs* program through education, mentors and resources.

St. Paul: Celebrated the opening of The Western Front boutique hotel in the downtown.

Staunton: Used grant funding to support 12 *StauntonNites* grants for monthly experiential retail events.

Warrenton: Commissioned and installed the first local *LOVEWorks* sign in downtown.

Winchester: Continued sixth season of special events like *Friday Night Live*, *Kidzfest* and a new summer weekday farmers market.

Wytheville: Completed Evolution Wytheville business plan competition, which created four new businesses in downtown.

“Dollar for dollar, pound for pound, Main Street is one of the most effective economic development programs ever created. Main Street’s holistic, incremental approach to community revitalization works—this has been proven time and time again.” – Edward T. McMahon



Culpeper

Culpeper Renaissance Inc. accepted proposals from local artists to refresh and revive a current historical sign on the building façade in the historic downtown, as well as develop a larger-than-life picture of George Washington as “the surveyor” on another building in downtown. Both murals have added vibrancy to the downtown and a visually appealing streetscape.

\$5,000 Downtown Investment Grant
\$6,246 leveraged funding

Marion

Marion Downtown Revitalization Association utilized the Virginia LOVEWorks program to install their own LOVE sign. The chalkboard background encourages residents and tourists to describe what they love about Marion. The sign is located in an alleyway that connects the public parking deck with downtown. This sign adds character to this space and encourages photo opportunities.

\$5,000 Downtown Investment Grant
\$1,500 leveraged funding

Fredericksburg

Fredericksburg Virginia Main Street completed a branding effort with their newly developed logo that included website design, interactive map, Facebook advertisements, Open Late flags, alleyway banners and gift card program.

\$10,000 Downtown Investment Grant
\$9,270 leveraged funding

Danville

The Downtown Danville Association was awarded a feasibility study for the vacant 650,000-square-foot White Mill property. The study prepared interior and exterior renderings, identified a mixed use of hotel, housing and office space, including construction pro forma, and identified potential funding sources.

\$25,000 Feasibility Grant

The Four Points

ECONOMIC VITALITY focuses on capital, incentives and other economic and financial tools to assist new and existing businesses, catalyze property development and create a supportive environment for entrepreneurs and innovators that drive local economies.

DESIGN supports a community's transformation by enhancing the physical and visual assets that set the commercial district apart.

PROMOTION positions the downtown or commercial district as the center of the community and hub of economic activity, while creating a positive image that showcases a community's unique characteristics.

ORGANIZATION involves creating a strong foundation for a sustainable revitalization effort, including cultivating partnerships, community involvement and resources for the district.

The Eight Principles

1. COMPREHENSIVE downtown revitalization is complex and cannot be accomplished through a single project.

2. INCREMENTAL small projects and simple activities can generate momentum and build support for larger efforts.

3. SELF-HELP success depends on the involvement and commitment of the community.

4. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP shows that each sector has an interest in community and economic development, and each has a role to play in the community's success.

5. IDENTIFYING AND CAPITALIZING ON EXISTING ASSETS means that each community has a unique character and assets that provide the foundation for revitalization.

6. QUALITY from storefront designs to promotions to educational programming.

7. CHANGE in attitudes and actions are necessary to improve economic conditions and build public support.

8. IMPLEMENTATION ORIENTED means that frequent, visible changes are a reminder that the revitalization effort is underway.



Jan. 22-24: *Main Street Director's Retreat* | St. Paul

January-February: *Community Development Grants How to Apply Workshops and Webinar*

April 16, 18 and 23: *The Six Q's of Marketing* | Hopewell, Wytheville and Fredericksburg

May 14, Noon-1 p.m.: *What is Main Street? (Webinar)*

July 22-24: *Downtown Intersections* | Lynchburg

Sept. 26, Noon-1 p.m.: *Historic Preservation: A Springboard for Economic Development (Webinar)*

Oct. 15, 16 and 18: *Listen and Learn: Engaging Missing Voices to Inspire Local Action* | Abingdon, Farmville and Orange

Nov. 14, Noon-1 p.m.: *Nonprofit Board Fundamentals (Webinar)*

Small-Scale Real Estate Developer Training and Capacity Building Program:

Feb 12-14: *Recruitment Training Webinars*

March 18-19: *Regional Small-Scale Development Lectures* | Harrisonburg, Wytheville and Petersburg

May 16: *Small-Scale Developer Workshop* | Staunton

July 20-21: *Small-Scale Developer Boot Camp* | Lynchburg

VirginiaMainStreet.com

Virginia Main Street trainings are an important opportunity to gain new skills, network with other communities and learn about resources available for downtown revitalization.



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